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Integrating Authentic Digital Materials into Task-Based Language Teaching: A Practical Framework for Contemporary ESL Classrooms

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Abstract: This study explores integrating authentic digital materials—blogs, vlogs, and mobile apps—into Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to enhance communicative competence and learner engagement. Synthesizing recent research, it highlights that digital media increase motivation, autonomy, and authentic communication when paired with purposeful tasks. Effective use, however, requires scaffolding, careful material selection, and teacher training. A five-phase framework is proposed: preparation, digital engagement, collaboration, reflection, and evaluation. This model supports implementing TBLT in digitally enriched environments while maintaining a balance between language focus and communicative authenticity.

Keywords: *Task-Based Language Teaching, authentic materials, digital literacy, blogs, vlogs, mobile applications, communicative competence, language pedagogy*

Introduction. The latest developments in digital technology have transformed English language instruction, introducing new models of communication that reflect the dynamics of modern discourse. Real materials—texts and media created for genuine communicative needs—subject learners to how language functions in real contexts, pragmatics, and cultural variation. In TBLT, learning occurs by executing actual tasks that mimic real-life communication rather than isolated language exercises. The blending of TBLT with authentic digital materials offers a promising direction for English as a Second Language (ESL) education, where learners acquire language from genuine input from technology-enhanced tasks with more authentic language production.

Research findings indicate that learner participation and communicative competence increase with the incorporation of authentic digital genres such as blogs, vlogs, and mobile apps into tasks. Such resources facilitate motivation, self-directed learning, and development of digital literacy, a valuable twenty-first-century skill. Despite such advantages, teachers are often confronted with issues of technological accessibility, task design, and pedagogical scaffolding in making use of such resources optimally. Thus, there is a need for a systematic framework to document the ways in which real

digital resources can be made functional within TBLT in an educationally appropriate manner.

Methods. Qualitative synthesis of empirical studies and theoretical discussions was conducted to establish effective technology-enhanced TBLT practices. Peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings between 2015 and 2025 were retrieved from databases such as ERIC, Scopus, and ScienceDirect by employing the following keywords: "task-based language teaching," "authentic materials," "digital tools," "blogs," "vlogs," and "mobile applications." Research was taken into consideration if it focused on the pedagogical use of digital materials in TBLT contexts in ESL or EFL contexts. Insights were learned on the character of the digital content used, task design, learner performance, and teaching approaches. Findings were interpreted thematically to extract a pedagogical model appropriate for classroom use.

Results. Across studies examined, integrating authentic digital materials within task-based teaching consistently led to increased learner motivation, improved communicative competence, and increased participation. Learners reported that engaging with digital materials—e.g., writing blogs, creating brief vlogs, or exchanging language via learning software—gave a feeling of authenticity and ownership of learning. In addition, collaborative tasks where digital platforms were used triggered negotiation of meaning, improving interpersonal communication and cultural awareness.

Successful implementation of digital materials in TBLT typically follows organized steps. Pre-tasking familiarizes learners with the digital genre and communicative elements thereof, and it helps learners become aware of discourse patterns and vocabulary relevant to them. During the task stage, learners work meaningfully with authentic materials like writing comments on blogs, leaving comments on vlogs, or solving problems using apps. Post-tasking is reflection, peer evaluation, and polishing of language output. The teacher still has to facilitate at every step, so the work is meaning-oriented rather than technology-oriented.

Despite successful outcomes, several challenges remain. Teachers have difficulty selecting level-appropriate digital materials and giving equal access to technology. Students may be harmed by cognitive overload when introduced to unpracticed digital tools or complex authentic texts. Moreover, some tasks jeopardize the neglect of linguistic outcomes through focus on technological novelty. Effective scaffolding and professional development are thus needed in order to maintain pedagogical balance.

Based on synthesized findings, a five-stage model of integrating real digital materials into TBLT is proposed:

— Task Preparation: Prior knowledge activation, exposure to digital genre, pre-teaching of most significant linguistic features.

—Digital Material Engagement: Activity with authentic materials (vlogs, blogs, apps) with a focus on comprehension, analysis, or discovery.

—Collaborative Task: Pair or group task involving the production or response to digital content with a communicative purpose.

—Reflection and Production: Revision, integration of feedback, and production of enhanced language output (e.g., learner-created blog or vlog).

—Evaluation and Extension: Evaluation of task outcomes and extension of the skills learnt to new online contexts.

Discussion. The integration of authentic digital materials in TBLT enhances the alignment of classroom learning with the use of language for actual purposes. Authenticity gives rise to the employment of English for communicative ends in actual situations, and sequencing based on tasks generates focus on meaning and meaningful interaction. Achievement based on the studies under review is dependent on how much the tasks are scaffolded to suit learners' proficiency and digital literacy levels.

Teachers also play a central mediating role in producing tasks that are linguistically fitting, technologically feasible, and culturally appropriate. Teacher development programs ought to therefore include training in digital pedagogy and task design. Future research should then cover longitudinal studies on how extended exposure to digital tasks affects learners' fluency, autonomy, and intercultural capabilities. Comparative studies across different learning environments would also provide further understanding of the ways in which digital affordances come together with pedagogical principles.

Conclusion. Genuine digital content, if implemented in task-based learning in a systematic way, enriches learning English by combining communicative authenticity and digital applicability. The provided five-stage framework helps teachers design solid yet flexible tasks for encouraging motivation, cooperation, and authentic language application. Successful application consists of cautious material selection, ongoing scaffolding, and reflective pedagogy. With the development of digital communication, the TBLT framework provides a solid basis for long-term, authentic English language teaching.

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